

CANCUN DECLARATION

ON CROSS-NATIONAL COLLABORATION IN COASTAL AND OCEAN MANAGEMENT

November 1-4, 2000

Cancun, Mexico



BACKGROUND

COSU 2000, the international conference on North American and European Perspectives on Ocean and Coastal Policy: Building Partnerships and Expanding the Technological Frontier, held in Cancun, Mexico, on November 1-4, 2000, convened 100 participants from North America, Europe and other regions to draw lessons from ongoing national efforts in integrated coastal and ocean management and to examine existing cross-national collaboration in this area. Conference participants included representatives from the governments of various nations in Europe, North America, and other regions, non-governmental organizations (environmental, scientific, and industry organizations), and the scientific community. The conference addressed several major trends that have been especially evident since the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development:

- The proliferation of international, national, regional, and sub-national efforts in establishing and implementing programs in integrated coastal and ocean management (ICM);
- The growing role of non-governmental organizations and communities in the establishment, implementation and evaluation of ICM;
- The expansion of cross-national collaborative efforts in ICM among governments, NGOs, scientists, and local communities; and
- The progress made in developing new technological and scientific information that has a direct application to improved management of oceans and coasts.

CONFERENCE DISCUSSION

The participants in the conference

EMPHASIZING the urgent need for governments, NGOs, economic/industry institutions, and other relevant institutions in the Americas and Europe to incorporate the basic principles of ICM enunciated in Agenda 21 in their respective approaches to the management of coastal and ocean areas,

NOTING the need to strengthen international public awareness of coastal and marine issues through media initiatives and to reinforce political will through educational and training initiatives for managers and public administrators,

EMPHASIZING the urgent need to reinforce research and exchange of information on socioeconomic and cultural aspects of ocean and coastal management,

NOTING the emergence of new technologies and scientific work, as well as of sources of traditional knowledge, that can contribute directly to the resolution of problems experienced in coastal and marine areas,

UNDERLINING the important contribution of collaboration and partnerships at the cross-national, regional and inter-regional levels to the resolution of common and shared coastal marine problems in the Americas, Europe and other regions (especially important in cases of marine pollution where the problems may well be very separated in spatial terms from their points of origin),

UNDERLINING the need for expanding collaboration across North, Central, South America, and the Caribbean, as well as across the Atlantic and Europe, through a common forum bringing together the many different actors with a stake in coastal and ocean issues to share experiences and knowledge and to discuss possible approaches and solutions,

RECOMMEND/INVITE relevant actors at the governmental, non-governmental, and academic levels to consider the following recommendations:



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada



CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

• **Creation of an Americas/European Regional Ocean Forum**

Conference participants observed that many cross-national collaboration efforts already exist; some are initiated and run by governments, others by NGOs, industry, and communities, and others by the scientific community or by a combination of these. Often, however, little interaction takes place among these efforts and opportunities are missed for achieving synergy among them. As well, participants noted that there is a need to strengthen the cooperation of NGOs across the Americas and Europe.

The participants recommended the establishment of a periodic regional forum on ocean and coastal policy involving governments, NGOs (environmental, scientific, and industry organizations), the scientific community, and other relevant organizations, in which national experiences and policy lessons may be exchanged, and cross-national collaboration on ICM may be expanded. The Americas/Europe Regional Oceans Forum will include discussions of: 1) national experiences and cross-national collaboration in ICM in the Americas (including North, Central, and South America, and the Caribbean), 2) national experiences and cross-national collaboration in ICM in Europe, and 3) cross-national collaboration in ICM between Europe and the Americas.

The participants further recommended the establishment of a Regional Oceans NGO Network to raise public awareness, heighten political will, and promote ICM.

• **Assessment of Lessons Learned from ICM Efforts in Various Nations**

Participants observed that all the national experiences discussed at the conference faced similar problems in achieving integrated management of oceans and coasts (such as ensuring that an integrated strategy is effectively implemented through multiple agencies and stakeholders; applying scientifically-based information to coastal decision-making, etc.). There is thus a need for carrying out systematic analyses, on a comparative basis, of how various ICM approaches have worked in different countries, what tools have been applied effectively and how, what lessons may be drawn from these experiences, and how to ensure that appropriate changes are made to laws, policies, and management practices to reflect the lessons learned.

• **Enhancement and Expansion of ICM Education**

As nations increasingly begin to establish and implement ICM, important needs for capacity building (education and training) soon become apparent. There is thus a need for expansion of educational efforts in the field, and the development of more extensive linkages among educational, government, and NGO institutions.

Education efforts need to be targeted to various levels:

- Government personnel (who may need training in ICM approaches, tools, and experiences)
- University students (to train the next generation of ICM managers)
- K through 12 education and the general public (to increase public awareness and understanding of marine and coastal issues)
- General public education through media (e.g., TV Discovery Channel, Learning Channel, and other media) and public awareness campaigns to raise issues and solutions related to ICM, necessary to build constituencies, promote compliance, and catalyze political will.

• **Identification of new opportunities for cross-national collaboration**

Participants agreed to explore new opportunities for cross-national collaboration on shared, trans-boundary coastal/ocean issues that would build on existing success stories, e.g., the Gulf of Maine and the Bight of the Californias pilot projects to address cross-boundary problems of land-based sources of marine degradation.